

Nez Perce National Forest  
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208-983-5143



Clearwater National Forest  
12730 Highway 12  
Orofino, ID 83544  
208-476-8200

## NEWS RELEASE - FIRE UPDATE

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**CONTACT:** Laura Smith

**DATE:** September 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **CLEARWATER-NEZ PERCE ZONE OVERVIEW**

High temperatures and low relative humidities combined to create conditions favorable for fire growth on the Clearwater-Nez Perce Fire Zone Sunday. One major new fire erupted and several others grew substantially. Several new closure orders have been enacted or are pending. **Individuals planning to travel in either Forest this week should check with their local Forest Service office to obtain the latest fire information.**

### **NEZ PERCE NATIONAL FOREST:**

The Meadow Fire was detected on the Nez Perce National Forest's Red River Ranger District Sunday afternoon. It quickly spread across an estimated 600 acres.

The fire, believed to have been caused by lightning, is located approximately 12 airline miles southeast of Elk City.

Aircraft dropped fire retardant and water on the fire's northern edge in an effort to keep the fire from spreading into the Red River drainage. That effort was successful.

A team of fire management specialists has been ordered to manage the Meadow Fire. They will arrive for a briefing this afternoon.

The fire's explosive growth and continuing forecasts for hot and dry conditions have prompted Forest officials to close several roads and trails in the fire's vicinity. The closures affect all or parts of Forest Roads No. 1170, 1170C, 1131, 9541, 9542, 468 (the Montana Road/Magruder Corridor), and 1166. Trails No. 505 and 541 are also affected. Details regarding the closures are posted at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>.

A second fire was reported on the Nez Perce National Forest's Red River Ranger District. That fire, located near Dixie, was contained.

No new fires were reported on the Salmon River, Clearwater or Moose Creek Ranger Districts.

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**CLEARWATER NATIONAL FOREST:**

The Powell Ranger District's Rabbit Fire, a remote wildland fire use fire that is being allowed to burn for its resource benefits, increased nearly 500 acres on Sunday. It is now estimated to be 600 acres.

The fire is located approximately 8 airline miles south of Powell (and roughly four miles north of Elk Summit).

Concerns about public safety prompted forest officials to close several roads and many trails in the Elk Summit area. Closures affect Forest Roads No. 360 (Elk Summit), 358 and 359 and Forest Trails No. 79, 45, 486, 1, 22, 28, 6, 10, 50, and 903.

The Milepost 128 Fire, located on the Forest's Lochsa Ranger District, doubled in size to 120 acres Sunday. It is located north of U.S. Highway 12 about 55 miles east of Kooskia. The fire is currently spreading downhill toward Highway 12 and flaggers are directing traffic on the Highway.

No new fires were reported on any of the Clearwater National Forest's Ranger Districts.

Several wildland fire use fires in the Clearwater National Forest's backcountry are being allowed to burn to improve forest conditions and big-game habitat. Information about these fires is posted on the Forest's website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater>.

For public safety, additional road and trail closures remain in effect. Specific information is posted at: [http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/VisitorInfo/Assets/travel\\_info](http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater/VisitorInfo/Assets/travel_info).

**HEAVENS GATE COMPLEX**

The Heaven's Gate Complex is still projected to be 21,000 acres. It is 50% contained with full containment still projected for September 6 (Wednesday).

The complex consists of four fires: the 17,310-acre Black Butte Fire located in, and west of, the Gospel-Hump Wilderness; the 3,625-acre Green Acres Fire located in the Nez Perce National Forest and Hells Canyon National Recreation Area; the 55-acre Horse Heaven Fire in Hells Canyon; and the 10-acre McCrea Fire in the Nez Perce National Forest.

There are 264 personnel assigned to the fire. They are supported by five aircraft, eight fire engines, four water tenders and three bulldozers.

Today crews will continue to patrol the fires, extinguishing spot fires that occur outside of firelines. Fire engines are positioned on the Salmon River Road to douse any spot fires

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that may ignite south of the Salmon River. More fireline is being constructed in preparation for a burnout operation intended to check the westward spread of the Black Butte Fire down the Salmon River canyon.

An area closure remains in effect for much of the Gospel-Hump Wilderness. It encompasses the southwestern 1/3 of the Wilderness between Forest Road No. 444 and the Salmon River. The western boundary originates at the mouth of Kelly Creek, north to Little Slate Saddle, then along Forest Road No. 394 to just east of Florence. It then ties back into the Wilderness north of Road No. 9922.

Forest Roads No. 394 and 643 are also closed.

The closure associated with the Green Acres Fire remains in effect for that portion of the Hells Canyon Wilderness from Windy Saddle north to Forest Road No. 1819 and west to the Snake River. Seven Devils Road No. 517 and Seven Devils Campground have been reopened; however, trails 124, 140, 58 and 101 north from the campground remain closed.

Additional information regarding the fire complex and related closures are available at:

Nez Perce National Forest – <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/nezperce/gvc>

Heavens Gate Complex – <http://fs.fed.us/r1/fire/incident/teams/stanich>

inciWeb Incident Information – <http://www.inciweb.org>

**Please contact Information Officer Kimberly Nelson at (208)628-3589 for further information regarding the Heavens Gate Fire Complex.**

#### **OTHER AGENCIES**

No new fires were reported by Craig Mountain (IDL), Maggie Creek (IDL), CPTPA or the BLM.

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